



DoD Selects Foreign Defense Equipment For Testing

The Department of Defense has selected six new start out-of-cycle projects to receive fiscal 2001 funding under the Foreign Comparative Testing (FCT) Program.

The six programs include the Driver's Vision Enhancer, a thermal imaging system from Canada; the Expeditionary Airfield Light-Duty Mat System, a replacement fabric for aircraft from France; environmentally safe Floating Smoke Pot Components from Germany; an enhanced UHF [Ultra-High Frequency] communications device, Multi-Bandwidth Submarine Antenna from the United Kingdom; the Tactical Geographic Information System, MARIA, battlespace software from Norway; and the Muzzle Breaks/Suppressors that will decrease flash and sound for M-4 carbines from Switzerland.

Authorized by Congress since 1980, the FCT Program is administered by the director, Strategic and Tactical Systems, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics).

The FCT Program responds to a growing awareness of the value of using non-developmental items to accelerate the acquisition process and cut rising development costs. The principal objective of the FCT Program is to support the U.S. warfighter by leveraging non-developmental items of allied and other friendly nations to satisfy U.S. defense requirements more quickly and economically. Given a world-class foreign item, U.S. user interest in the item, a valid operational requirement, and good

procurement potential, the FCT Program reduces the acquisition cycle for fielding needed systems and equipment not otherwise available. At the same time, by promoting competition and eliminating unnecessary research, development, test, and evaluation expenses, the FCT Program reduces total ownership costs of military systems while enhancing standardization and interoperability, and promoting international cooperation.

Each year the Military Services and U.S. Special Operations Command nominate candidate projects for FCT funding consideration. Each proposed project is screened to ensure the non-developmental item addresses valid requirements, a thorough market survey was conducted to identify all potential contenders, and the sponsor has developed a viable acquisition strategy to procure the foreign item if it tests successfully and offers best value.

Of the six new out-of-cycle projects for fiscal 2001, one is sponsored by the Army, four by the Navy and Marine Corps, and one by the U.S. Special Operations Command. More details on the six projects are available on the Web at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jul2001/d20010719fct.pdf>. Additional FCT Program information is available on the FCT Home Page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.acq.osd.mil/sts/fct/>.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at www.defenselink.mil/news.